

# The Political Economy of Andrew Carnegie's Library Philanthropy, with a Reflection on its Relevance to the Philanthropic Work of Bill Gates

SIOBHAN STEVENSON

*University of Toronto, Canada*

When it was announced in 1997, Bill Gates' library philanthropy programme attracted a tremendous amount of media attention. A central feature of that coverage was a renewed interest in Andrew Carnegie's library building programme. While identifying the historical similarities between Carnegie and Gates is an interesting exercise, failure to ground these comparisons in a critical policy analysis frame that attends to the political economy of large-scale private philanthropy seriously limits, if not jeopardizes, the public library community's ability to respond to the broader cultural implications of Gates' library programme. Here, the radical philanthropic approach is used to frame a historical analysis of Andrew Carnegie's philanthropy as a response to the contemporary class warfare of the period, within which he was deeply implicated. Unpacking Carnegie's library philanthropy for its ideological importance in the struggle over the ownership and control of the means of industrial production provides a powerful analytic lens through which to view capital's updated hegemonic project, as reflected in Gates' philanthropy, which is designed to bring software and internet connectivity to America's public libraries.

**KEYWORDS** Andrew Carnegie, Bill Gates, public libraries, political economy, philanthropy, class conflict, labour question, Knights of Labor

## Introduction

The fiscal austerity of the neo-liberal state, combined with the dot.com boom of the 1990s and the increasing wealth gap, has seen a historic revival in the number of private philanthropies established in the United States. Ranging in scope and scale from modest community-based and volunteer associations to multipurpose

philanthropic enterprises with international mandates, public sector institutions are looking increasingly to these organizations as sources of funding for both their capital and operating costs. There is no denying that in this era of diminished public spending such philanthropy represents a windfall for public institutions, yet its value is not uncontested. Serious questions remain open regarding the influence of these private organizations on the functioning of public sector agencies, including who ultimately benefits from these partnerships and who decides. Further, in the case of large-scale general-purpose philanthropies, their influence on the public policy process, both national and international, is significant and growing.

On its face, one of the biggest beneficiaries of this philanthropic resurgence has been America's public library. Not since the end of the nineteenth century, during another period of fundamental economic and social change, has the public library been the recipient of such largesse. At that time, Andrew Carnegie donated over \$40 million to build public libraries in 1,412 communities across the United States.<sup>1</sup> This, in addition to the \$15 million he spent on libraries abroad. According to *Library Journal*, this amount would be the equivalent of \$1 billion in today's dollars.<sup>2</sup> To date, Bill Gates has spent more than \$325 million<sup>3</sup> of the \$1.1 billion of his philanthropic dollars on libraries.<sup>4</sup> Both Carnegie and Gates constituted the public library and their library programmes as sources of amelioration for many of the social problems associated with fundamental change to the means and relations of production. During Carnegie's era, these problems were captured under the heading 'labor question', and the goal of his philanthropy was to 'lessen the wide and deplorable gulf between the rich and the poor'.<sup>5</sup> Similarly, the purpose of Gates' philanthropic projects has always been to 'help reduce inequity in the United States'.<sup>6</sup> In both cases, foundation interests in the library sector extended well beyond the initial outlay for buildings, computers, and software to what some describe as a deeper level of influence in the areas of education, research and development, and professional communications.<sup>7</sup>

As a means of interpreting their good fortune, much has been made of the historical parallels between these two men, who are separated by more than a century. In addition to targeting public libraries as the first beneficiaries of their philanthropy, both typify the successful American capitalist: entrepreneurial, technologically innovative, and a captain of his industry. Whereas Carnegie made his fortune — estimated at \$100 billion in today's dollars<sup>8</sup> — within the context of a nascent industrial capitalism, Bill Gates has amassed his billions — topping \$100 billion at the height of the dot.com boom<sup>9</sup> — within the transition to a global information economy. As philanthropists, both men have been credited with authoring their generation's philanthropic playbook.<sup>10</sup>

While identifying the historical similarities between Carnegie and Gates is an interesting exercise, failure to ground these comparisons within a critical policy analysis frame that attends to the political economy of large-scale private philanthropy seriously limits, if not jeopardizes, the public library community's ability to interpret and respond to the broader cultural implications of Gates' library programme. Here, the radical philanthropic approach taken up by scholars such as Ellen Condcliffe Lagemann,<sup>11</sup> Robert Arnoe,<sup>12</sup> Donald Fischer,<sup>13</sup> and Daniel Faber and Deborah McCarthy<sup>14</sup> is used to frame a historical analysis of Andrew Carnegie's philanthropy as a response to the contemporary class warfare of the period and within which he

was deeply implicated. Unpacking Carnegie's library philanthropy for its ideological importance in the struggle over the ownership and control of the means of industrial production provides a powerful analytic lens through which to view capital's updated hegemonic project, as reflected in Gates' philanthropy, which is designed to bring software, hardware, and internet connectivity not only to America's public libraries, but also to libraries around the world.

This research project expands upon previous research into the influence of Carnegie's library building programme in three ways.<sup>15</sup> First, the political economy approach applied here, and which incorporates a radical philanthropic perspective, enables us to explore previously unexamined aspects of Carnegie's philanthropy, namely, its role in the class battle between a rapidly industrializing capital and rapidly expanding labour movement. Both Richards<sup>16</sup> and Van Slyck<sup>17</sup> make intriguing connections between emerging social relations of production and Carnegie's library building programme. Here Carnegie's treatment of his factory workers and subsequent library philanthropy in Braddock and Homestead, Pennsylvania, are placed under a microscope. Both communities are considered historically significant within the wider political economy surrounding America's transition to an industrial economy<sup>18</sup> and represent two of Carnegie's earliest and richest library gifts,<sup>19</sup> thereby ensuring their analytic value for the questions posed by this research.

Secondly, the object of this historical analysis is policy discourse. Carnegie's discourse as representative of the capital class and as reflected in his library dedication speeches is considered alongside the competing discourse of the Knights of Labor over the most pressing national policy issue of the time, 'the labor question'. The Knights of Labor were America's pre-eminent labour movement of the time. At its peak in the mid-1880s, the organization boasted a membership of over one million workers. According to labour historian Leon Fink, 'The quintessential expression of the labor movement in the Gilded Age was the Noble and Holy Order of the Knights of Labor, the first mass organization of the American working class'.<sup>20</sup> That both capital and labour would constitute information, worker education, and libraries as important parts of their policy solutions is discursively significant. Further, to the extent that public librarians reproduced the discourses of Carnegie over those of labour provides fairly compelling evidence about their role in that tumultuous period of class conflict and struggle.

Thirdly, identifying the central ideological themes underlying Carnegie's library discourses as policies designed to ameliorate the problems associated with the 'labor question' provides us with a concrete set of discursive comparators with which to undertake future analyses of Gates' library discourse within the context of the 'digital divide'. The importance of this kind of historical re-examination cannot be overstated. Indeed, within the field there has been an increased recognition of the value that critically informed historical analyses have for interpreting and responding to current conditions.<sup>21</sup> According to Wiegand, nowhere is this more apparent than in the field's preoccupation with the library as a site for the transmission of 'useful knowledge'.<sup>22</sup> Within this analysis of Carnegie's influence on the development of the public library, the concept of 'useful knowledge' emerges as an important discursive resource in both (1) the battle between Carnegie (as representative of capital) and the Knights of Labor (as representative of labour), and (2) the alliance forged between a nascent professional class (librarianship) and capital. Discovering the discursive

significance of Carnegie's 'useful knowledge' for the amelioration of the 'labor question' opens the door for an evaluation of Gates' donation of hardware and software for the purpose of bridging the digital divide within the context of capital's updated hegemonic project.

## The political economy of philanthropy

In the early 1980s an important scholarly debate unfolded between conservative and critical researchers over the role of the American philanthropic foundation in capitalism's evolution over the course of the twentieth century. According to Karl and Katz,<sup>23</sup> the most significant of these was between Donald Fischer,<sup>24</sup> a critical scholar who was concerned with the role of foundations in the production and reproduction of hegemony, and Martin Bulmer,<sup>25</sup> a conservative scholar who promoted foundations as objective and neutral institutions emblematic of American pluralism. In the end, Fischer's 'articulat[ion] of a Gramscian rationale [has] since become the standard approach of radical foundation critics'.<sup>26</sup> From this perspective, large general-purpose foundations (specifically Ford, Carnegie, and Rockefeller, and here we could update that list to include Gates, Buffett, and Soros) are seen to represent specific class interests. Given the wealth and power underlying their formation, such foundations have the ability to influence public policy agendas in ways that support their particular worldview. Radical foundation critics study the ways in which these foundations have come to influence public policy via the production and reproduction of ideologies conducive to capital's interests.<sup>27</sup> The value of the radical philanthropy perspective is that it provides us with an alternative framework within which to interrogate the influence of philanthropic foundations on the development of the public library within capitalism.

Indeed, the timing of Carnegie's entry into the philanthropy business *vis-à-vis* his donation of public libraries — that is, as class war was being waged throughout the nation and within his own mills — is too rich to ignore. Not only did Carnegie's early library philanthropy target communities within which his key industrial concerns resided including Braddock, Homestead, Allegheny, and Pittsburgh,<sup>28</sup> but, in the case of Braddock and later Homestead, the high-profile defeat of the mill's unions preceded the library gift. In *The Battle for Homestead, 1880–1892: Politics, Culture, and Steel*, Krause<sup>29</sup> contextualizes these gifts within the wider political economy of the day:

As the stormy history of work relations at the Edgar Thomson [Braddock] demonstrates, many of the great political and moral questions then at the center of America's divided allegiances were embedded in the gift of the library: Who would control the factories and the seats of government? Who would be best equipped to shape cultural values of modern America? What was the meaning of democracy? What was the measure of a good life? These questions, also encoded in Carnegie's remarks directed at the workers of Homestead, surely weighed on him, too.<sup>30</sup>

Within this expanded frame, new questions can be posed, including: how did Carnegie define 'the labor question' he was trying to ameliorate through his library programme, and how did this compare with labour's definition? How did Carnegie's

library programme constitute the users of libraries in terms of their roles as citizens, workers, and consumers, and what influence did this have on the nascent public library within an emerging industrial society? What kinds of intertextual linkages exist between labour's discourse on the one hand and Carnegie's on the other, and as reflected in the professional discourses of the period under analysis?

## The class battle in print

The power of the printed word and the press — both popular and alternative — in the class war between an industrializing capital and an organizing labour has been well documented by communications scholars working in the critical tradition.<sup>31</sup> Further, although the outcomes of 'on the ground' battles in places like Chicago's Haymarket and Pennsylvania's Homestead were significant, it was recognized on both sides that the war itself would be won or lost through discourse.<sup>32</sup> Not surprisingly, then, Carnegie and his contemporaries were prolific. In the words of one historian, 'like Carnegie, they [Rockefeller, Vanderbilt, and Gould] felt writing was a way to influence, and they sought quite consciously so to write and so to publish as to shape public opinion and policy'.<sup>33</sup> While the power of labour leaders to access the mainstream media was limited, if non-existent, by the 1880s, they too had established their own viable order of public discourse, which included seventeen monthly journals, 400 weeklies, and a handful of dailies.<sup>34</sup> These publications provided workers with alternative discursive resources and a counter-narrative with which to contest capital's social project while promoting their own vision for society. Unpacking Carnegie's and the Knights of Labor's competing discourses against the wider social practices surrounding the Braddock and Homestead strikes provides an interpretive frame within which to evaluate not only Carnegie's influence on the development of the American public library but also labour's.

### *Fairclough's Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis*

The method of discourse analysis used here is based on Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of a Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis, or TODA.<sup>35</sup> Fairclough combines critical linguistics with social and political thought in 'the form of a framework suitable for use in social science research and specifically the study of social change'.<sup>36</sup> The salient features of this multifaceted model are the constitutive effects of discourse on the formation of: (1) social identities; (2) social relations between identities; and (3) wider systems of knowledge and belief (ideology).

The following discussion is laid out in a manner consistent with Fairclough's model. First, the wider policy environment within which Carnegie's philanthropy unfolded is provided, including a brief description of the policy problem known as 'the labor question'. As well, the social identities of Andrew Carnegie as a representative of the capital class and the Knights of Labor as representative of the labour class are introduced. Secondly, the discourses of these competing identities within the context of 'the labor question' are analysed for their definitions of and solutions to the policy problem, which included the library. Within this analysis, Carnegie's library dedication speech in Braddock, Pennsylvania, is foregrounded and its ideological significance as a discursive weapon in the battle between capital and labour is

highlighted. Finally, a representative sample of the professional discourses of the period, as collected from an in-depth survey of *Public Libraries* and *Library Journal* between the years 1880 and 1910, are analysed for clues to the system(s) of values and beliefs underlying their production and reproduction. Only those articles, editorials, and annual ALA conference speeches that dealt specifically with the labour identity were considered for the ways in which they served to discursively reproduce or negate the competing discourses of capital and labour.

### En garde: the 'Age of Steel' and the 'labor question'

By the 1880s the rise and concentration of capital in the hands of individuals, syndicates and trusts, the widespread establishment of the factory system of production, and the almost complete transformation of once independent workers into permanent and dependent wage earners created a society of unprecedented wealth for the few and grinding poverty for the majority.<sup>37</sup> As reported by labour journalist John Swinton in 1894, 'nine per cent of the population owned eighty-four per cent of the wealth, while ninety-one per cent were in straitened circumstances, living from hand to mouth'.<sup>38</sup>

Out of this crucible of change, the competing social identities and hegemonic projects of labour and capital would emerge to engage in the bloodiest class battles experienced in the United States before or since. The phrase 'labor question' became a generational shorthand for this class war. Indeed, 'from 1877 and for the next quarter of a century, workers and managers continued to debate and struggle over that question in the press, in local neighborhoods, at the ballot box, and at work-places'.<sup>39</sup> Within the discourses of both capital and labour, the phrase 'labor question' opened onto a lexicon of shared but contested vocabulary. From an industrial perspective, each would variously constitute the labour question in terms of discrete issues seemingly amenable to immediate amelioration: wages, hours worked, the distribution of profits, the right to unionize, etc. However, as an issue of national concern, the constitution of solutions to the labour question demanded attending to a far more complex set of issues at the core of a nascent American identity. The 'labor question' as constituted in the discourses of both labour and capital was actually a question of competing social values; resolution would provide the foundation upon which American society would proceed to author its requirements for industrial capitalism as a stable system of social and economic integration.

Significantly, for this study, one of the most important sites of class conflict was Homestead, Pennsylvania, where over the course of the late 1880s and early 1890s the Carnegie Corporation and a combination of the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers (AAISW) and the Knights of Labor clashed repeatedly over the right to define current and future relations of production. In the words of labour historian Philip Foner, Homestead was 'one of the bloodiest clashes between capital and labour in American history and aroused nationwide and international attention'.<sup>40</sup> In the end, the defeat of the union in 1892 sent reverberations throughout the national labour movement and profoundly shifted the historical trajectory of American labour politics.<sup>41</sup> Six years later, Carnegie dedicated a library building to the working men and women of that community.

## The combatants: Carnegie and the Knights

By the early 1890s, Carnegie had established his position as the pre-eminent steel manufacturer in the world. His adoption of mechanized production, combined with scientific management principles, accelerated production rates and, more importantly, increased accumulation on an unprecedented scale. But, as Carnegie wrote in his *Gospel of Wealth* in 1889: 'The price we pay for this salutatory change is no doubt great'.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, mechanized industrial production demanded huge and ongoing investments of capital to cover not only its initial installation but also its regular maintenance and upgrading requirements. At the same time, production on this scale and within the context of an unregulated competitive marketplace resulted in periods of overproduction and a saturated market. For capital, the only variable factor remaining in the profit calculus was labour. As owners of the means of production and in the absence of any countervailing force (i.e., the state), they were able to exercise great latitude with respect to reducing labour costs. Low wages, long hours, and hiring from the ranks of surplus workers (new immigrants and displaced labour in the neighbouring cities of Pittsburgh, Chicago, and New York) were some of the strategies used to realize a profit — at the expense of the labouring classes.

If Andrew Carnegie was a captain of industry, the Knights of Labor was, as 'the largest and most representative labor body until its time — and probably the single largest unionizing movement in the Western World during the 1880s',<sup>43</sup> the captain of America's burgeoning organized labour movement. Membership was open to all workers: skilled, unskilled, women, immigrants, and even those sections of the middle class sympathetic to the cause. More than a union, the Knights represented a way of life, a working-class culture and an alternative social agenda for a country in the midst of monumental social change. Indeed, the Knights were not merely a reaction to, and a defence against, the immiserating effects of the current system; they were actually a catalyst for change and a proactive social force in their own right. In the words of Susan Levine, the Knights provided a 'counter-vision of cooperation, equality, and social responsibility'.<sup>44</sup> Significantly, the Knights did not seek the replacement of capitalism, nor did they oppose the new productive technologies. Rather, they envisioned the socialization of these new means of production so that, as labour journalist John Swinton said in 1894, 'these mighty agencies shall be used for public advantage rather than private enrichment, for the welfare of the community rather than its impoverishment'.<sup>45</sup>

## Dueling discourses: attack, parry, and reprise

### *The attack: Carnegie's library dedication speeches*

To follow, and except where otherwise noted, Carnegie's 1889 library dedication in Braddock, entitled 'The common interests of labour and capital: address to working-men',<sup>46</sup> is analyzed for the ideological work it performed in relation to (1) the constitution of and solution to the 'labor question', within which the institution of the public library figured predominantly, and (2) Carnegie's specific prescriptions for collections and services to meet the needs of labour. The Braddock dedication speech has been selected because, as the first of its kind to be delivered in Pennsylvania,



it provided the template for those that would follow in Allegheny in 1890, in Pittsburgh in 1895, and in Homestead in 1898.

In this speech, Carnegie legitimizes emergent social relations of production as: 'that irresistible tendency of our age, which draws manufacturing into immense establishments, requiring the work of thousands of men', thus 'employees become more like human machines to the employer, and the employer becomes almost a myth to the men'. The result: 'capital is ignorant of the necessities and the just dues of labour, and labour of the necessities and dangers of capital. This is the true origin of the friction between them'.<sup>47</sup> The solution, according to Carnegie:

More knowledge on the part of capital of the good qualities of those that serve it, and some knowledge on the part of the men of *the economic laws which hold the capitalist in their relentless grasp*, would obviate most of the difficulties which arise between *these two social forces*, which are indispensably necessary to each other [...] If this library [Braddock] can be instrumental in the slightest degree to spreading knowledge in this department, it will have justified its existence.<sup>48</sup> [Emphases added]

Targeting mutual class ignorance and the need for more information as a means of obviating the overt manifestations of conflict associated with the transition to industrial capitalism shifted the policy problem and its solution away from a critique of the system *per se* and onto the more rhetorically ambiguous problem of communication, information and knowledge. Linguistically, this was achieved by endowing inanimate subjects such as 'economic laws' with agency, thereby masking the role of class power in the creation and maintenance of current conditions. Discursively, the above passage served to minimize the conflict while promoting an image of class relations as one of social parity, as reflected in the reference to 'these two social forces'.

Within this discursive framing, the public library represented the ideal solution to the problem. Not only did it fulfill a myriad of important functions with respect to class conflict through the edification of labour concerning 'those economic laws which hold the capitalist in their relentless grasp', but it also provided an appropriate outlet for the benevolent capitalist who, according to Carnegie 'ha[d] accepted the gospel [of wealth] which proclaims him a trustee of the surplus that has come to him'.<sup>49</sup> Further, as a means of legitimating the wealth gap, Carnegie told the working people of Pittsburgh at their library's dedication ceremony in 1895: 'I should much rather be instrumental in bringing to the working-man or woman this taste [for reading] than mere dollars. It is better than a fortune'.<sup>50</sup> Finally, the public library provided, in the words of Carnegie, the 'means by which those who desire to improve may do so',<sup>51</sup> thus contributing to those ideologies of individualism that would eventually come to underwrite America's industrial economy's ongoing requirements for production and reproduction. According to the Marxist economist James O'Connor, 'American individualism is capital's most powerful weapon of ideological domination of labor in the USA'.<sup>52</sup>

Discursively, once Carnegie establishes the value of the public library within the context of the 'labor question', he proceeds to describe the types of collections and the kinds of reading workers should engage in if they are to benefit from the library and improve their circumstances. Again, a critical discourse analysis of these texts



provides evidence of their ideological import with respect to contemporary social relations of production and reproduction. For example, Carnegie advises workers to study economics, those 'certain great laws that will be obeyed: the law of competition, the law of wages and the law of profits' which workers will 'find laid down in the text-books'. Carnegie also encourages workers to educate themselves in the industrial arts: 'if you are a mechanic, then from this library study every work bearing upon the subject of mechanics [...] If you are at the furnaces, then every work upon the blast furnace [...] That should be your ideal'.<sup>53</sup>

Within this context, the emphasis is placed on the value of skilled labour for social advancement:

There is no means so sure for enabling the workman to rise to the foremanship, manag-  
ership and finally partnership as knowledge of all that has been done and is being done  
in the world-today in the special department in which he labours.<sup>54</sup>

Finally, Carnegie balances this reading on technical, scientific and economic issues with the 'important duty of reading the masters in literature, and by all means fiction' as the 'best means of enjoyment and rest'.<sup>55</sup>

In addition to reproducing a number of key ideological arguments — including ideologies of individualism as embedded in promises of social mobility through equal opportunities for individual study and self-help, as well as neutralizing the contested nature of productive technologies through the development of technologically deterministic policy frames that link the reading of and access to technical and scientific information to social advancement — Carnegie's prescriptions open onto some of the inherent contradictions associated with industrial capital's hegemonic project. For instance, in the process of defining what he describes as the 'new idea of education' Carnegie emphasizes 'useful knowledge'<sup>56</sup> as central to the development of suitable collections:

[...] Here in the rooms of this library, there is, or I hope soon will be, the whole world's  
experience brought right before you down to recent date. In any question of mechanics  
or any question of chemistry, any question of furnace practice, you will find the records  
of the world at your disposal.<sup>57</sup>

Mechanics, chemistry, and furnace practice are singled out as representative of 'the whole world's experience' and not, say, the texts central to a humanistic education: 'Men have wasted precious years trying to extract education from an ignorant past [...] obtaining knowledge of such languages as Greek and Latin, which are no more practical use than Choctaw'. In fact, Carnegie warns of the dangers of a college education: 'I have known few young men intended for business who were not injured by a college education'. His emphasis was utilitarian: 'These improvements and inventions come from educated — educated in the true sense — and never the ignorant workman [...]. If they have not read, then they have observed, which is the best form of education'. These constructions reflect underlying values completely opposite to those of labour with respect to the education of the working class.<sup>58</sup>

Similarly, Carnegie's statement: 'In these days of transition and struggle between capital and labour, to no better purpose can you devote a few of *your spare hours* than to the study of [...]'<sup>59</sup> [emphasis added] completely ignores labour's struggle to

achieve the eight-hour day. Indeed, following the strike in Homestead, labour historian Leon Wolfe noted that ‘after the 1892 strike the twelve-hour day, seven days per week, with a twenty-four hour stretch every second week’ was the norm at Carnegie’s mill.<sup>60</sup> This emphasis on developing technical skills, specifically with respect to industrial practices, is also completely at odds with industrial capital’s well-documented requirements for, and movement towards, a large unskilled or semi-skilled labour force. Finally, Carnegie’s constitution of his gift of the library is premised on the assumption that the library can help his fellow-workmen: ‘I have just purchased a great satisfaction, one of the greatest I have every acquired. I have been privileged to help some of my fellow-workmen help themselves’.<sup>61</sup> Placing the simulated egalitarianism of the phrase ‘my fellow-workmen’ aside, this kind of monetary ‘help’ takes on a different meaning when considered against the contemporary struggle for a fair wage. The assumption underlying this statement is inter-textually established in Carnegie’s writing on the best uses for surplus wealth and his description of the value of Samuel J. Tildon’s donation of a public library in New York: ‘Considering the good part of the race that congregates in and around Manhattan Island, would its permanent benefit have been better promoted had these millions been allowed to circulate in small sums through the hands of the masses?’.<sup>62</sup>

### *The parry: the Knights of Labor’s discourse*

As with capital, labour’s discourse was an important weapon in the battle to gain widespread support for their position on ‘the labor question’. Given the ideological dimensions of this project, it was to be expected that the discursive strategies employed by labour would stand in sharp contrast to those provided by capital. In reality, a discourse analysis of the Knights’ texts reflects both the mirror opposite of Carnegie’s, as well as a number of noteworthy parallels.

Ultimately, labour’s counter-narrative for the ‘labor question’ was not about survival of the fittest, nor capitalism’s ‘relentless grasp on the capital class’, nor the effects of its ‘immutable laws’, which, according to Carnegie, were beyond human control; nor was it the result of the new technologies of production; nor even a breakdown in communication between the classes. For, as John Swinton reminded his readers in his 1894 ‘Gospel of Labor’, ‘The forces of nature, of mechanism, and of capital are all friendly and advantageous to man, when properly used’.<sup>63</sup> Rather, the problem, neatly summarized by Swinton, was: ‘all of the features of American life can be brought under one head, into a single question — that of the proper use of our country’s resources, the proper distribution of our public products, the popular enforcement of popular rights’.<sup>64</sup>

For organized labour, the education of the worker and the wider society was constituted as a prerequisite for any project aimed at the emancipation of labour from capital. Indeed, like Carnegie, the Knights pointed to ignorance as the root cause of the problem: ‘It is probable the conflict between capital and labor originates in a misunderstanding: capital does not comprehend labor and labor does not understand capital’.<sup>65</sup> For the contemporary labour writer, David Ross: ‘Many painful conflicts of the past between capital on the one side and labor on the other, have had their origins in a stupid misunderstanding [...] [an] almost complete ignorance of each other’s real position’.<sup>66</sup> The Knights privileged learning and intellectual development

in any strategy aimed at resolving class conflict. A central feature of this commitment to worker edification was the establishment of libraries and reading rooms. Historian Leon Fink characterized the situation thus: 'Through a network of reading rooms, traveling lecturers, dramatic societies, and the labor press, radical labor leadership hoped to awaken the masses of working people to a sense of their rights and responsibilities'.<sup>67</sup>

If discursive success is measured by the extent to which a social identity's discourse penetrates the wider public sphere, then the Knights were achieving this aim:

[...] through its sponsorship of libraries and reading rooms, lecture societies, newspapers, parades, sporting clubs and cooperatives, [the Knights of Labor] influenced a far greater number of people than its immediate membership alone, thereby nurturing what historian Richard Oestreicher has called a broad 'subculture of resistance'.<sup>68</sup>

### ***The reprise: information and libraries***

For both the Knights and Carnegie, mutual class ignorance was at the heart of the labour question. Given the roots of each identity's historic struggle, however, they would occupy different ideological positions with respect to (a) the nature and structure of the 'missing' information, (b) the best means by which such information should be created, disseminated, and consumed, and, (c) the larger social project (maintenance of the status quo or social change) into which this new knowledge would be fed.

As discussed, Carnegie emphasized the value of 'useful knowledge'. This included technical information, which would make workers 'more valuable to their employers and so lay up intellectual capital that cannot be impaired or depreciated', as well as economic information, that is 'there are certain great laws [that] will be obeyed: the law of supply and demand; the law of competition; the law of wages and profits'; and, 'a good work of fiction'. Within this context he often talked about textbooks, newspapers, trade journals, and scientific books.<sup>69</sup>

While the Knights were less specific with respect to format or content, they were unequivocal about the goal of educating labour: '[...] the advancement of humanity' and 'the emancipation of the wealth producers from the monopolist, the speculator and the usurer'. Finally, while Carnegie emphasized independent study, labour encouraged a more social approach to knowledge acquisition, often balancing thought, study, and reflection with debate and 'constant discussion'.<sup>70</sup>

Given the significance of information to both social projects and their reliance on libraries as a site of dissemination, the question remains: how did contemporary professional discourses of the period reproduce the differing projects of capital and labour? With respect to the role Andrew Carnegie occupied in the establishment of American public library buildings, what discursive evidence is there of his influence over the development of that public institution and as embodied in that institution's own discourse? Further, given the Knights' establishment of libraries for their members and the broader community, what discursive evidence exists of the public library's orientation toward, and support of, this important social identity? That the labour identity would be the one to ultimately support this institution through municipal property taxes — indeed, even Carnegie acknowledges that the library is ultimately the property of the worker<sup>71</sup> — how is that worker constructed by the

profession, from whose discourse has this construction been drawn, and which class can be said to benefit from these constructions?

### **Public library discourse: professional constitutions of labour as wage earner, nascent consumer, and citizen**

In order to appreciate the discursive significance underwriting professional constitutions of labour and capital identities and relations, consideration must first be given to the broader historical context of the profession's contemporary social practices. As with labour and capital, librarians found themselves in a period of transformation. Indeed, public librarianship was a relatively new phenomenon, and the social identity of the public librarian and the institutional identity of the public library had yet to be stabilized. From a policy perspective, public librarianship, like school teaching, social work, and nursing, was a response to the more overt manifestations of class conflict and the fallout from an unregulated capitalism.<sup>72</sup> As such, public library discourses can be read as one attempt, on the part of the profession, to write the practice of public librarianship into the policy environment through the creation of policy narratives that privileged the ameliorative role of the public library and the public librarian. This enables a reading of these discourses as distinct from, but intertextually related to, that of capital and labour, and not as mere instruments of either class. Our interest resides in the meaning of these professional constructions with respect to the development of services and collections aimed at meeting the 'information needs' of the working class, as well as how such constructions supported or negated dominant social relations of production.

In the final analysis, the vast majority of the professional discourse produced during the period under analysis dealt with less contentious problems associated with library techniques and related policy issues; however, within those texts that did deal with labour, an inter-textual mix of elements associated with the discourses of both capital (as represented by Carnegie) and labour (as represented by the Knights of Labor) is discernable. Generally, within those articles dealing specifically with services to labour,<sup>73</sup> capital's requirements for social relations of production and circulation (consumption) are largely reproduced. Conversely, those articles that consider the role of the public library in relation to the state and the citizen identity share many common discursive elements with the Knights.<sup>74</sup> Given that each identity draws its discourse from a common rhetorical reservoir, shared vocabularies are to be expected; however, the meanings attached to these shared concepts and linguistically coded in each identity's discourse provide evidence of their contested nature as well as clues to the social struggles underlying their formation.

To follow are a series of representative examples of how labour is constituted as worker, citizen, and consumer, followed by a discussion of how such constructions fed into a nascent profession's self-image as socially relevant and necessary while simultaneously reproducing those discursive resources most common to the capital class.

#### ***The wage earner***

With respect to work, the following excerpt is taken from the proceedings of a library conference held in 1909 and transcribed in *Public Libraries* by Florence Russell,

Secretary. The speaker was Thomas H. Smith of the New Haven Public Library, and his topic was 'the library and the mechanic'.<sup>75</sup> The following excerpt was selected because it contains many of the requisite discursive features and tensions that characterize the professional literature of the period. Further, although written thirty years after Carnegie's speech to working men at the dedication of the Braddock Public Library, the discursive strategies employed remain unchanged.

The library owes a share of its educational functions to those who have gone directly from the grammar school to the workbench, and there is no doubt that putting into the hands of the wage-earner books that will enable him to rise to his calling, or take a more advanced or congenial or better paid one, is not the least important among the library services. Provision for the workman's need ought to be made as a matter of right and not favour. Every library should have at least one book each of the common trades, and even the smallest one on each of the local industries.<sup>76</sup>

Perhaps the single most important discursive construction within this text, and one which is consistently reproduced within the professional discourse, is the unequivocal connection between a worker's educational needs and the provision of books and other formats (newspapers and trade journals) on technical subjects. That there is a relationship between access to books on the common trades *and* social mobility is assumed: 'there is no doubt that putting into the hands of the wage-earner books that will enable him to rise to his calling, or take a more advanced or congenial or better paid one is not the least important among the library services'.<sup>77</sup> From a linguistic perspective, endowing the inanimate object 'books' with the agency to 'enable' a worker to 'rise to his calling' obfuscates the role of power in social advancement by placing responsibility for upward mobility on the worker. That books are now freely available not only serves to transfer responsibility for individual living conditions away from the system and onto the individual, but it also downplays the reality of large-scale, mechanized assembly production's requirement for an army of unskilled and semi-skilled workers.

Similarly, although services were offered to all with the promise of advancement, elsewhere in the library literature, the value of universal access is constituted as a sure means of enabling social mobility but only for the few. Whether they are constituted as the exceptional<sup>78</sup> or merely ambitious,<sup>79</sup> the emphasis was on 'finding and fostering the few'.<sup>80</sup> Such constructions, while seeming to support values that crossed class lines (i.e., self-improvement, independence, and equity of opportunity) were in themselves contested terrain. Indeed, the profession's focus on self-improvement can be read as contributing to class fragmentation by creating conditions which encouraged competition between workers. Conversely, the Knights took a different tack: 'while embracing the principle of self-improvement [...] The Knights incorporated it into a cooperative effort'.<sup>81</sup>

Elsewhere, the development of local collections that had 'at least one book each of the common trades, and even the smallest one on each of the local industries' was consistently constituted as a service imperative within the professional discourse of the period. In addition to its value for the individual worker, services in support of local industry became a key argument used by the profession for the purposes of justifying its value as a municipal tax-supported institution. Thus, such collections and services became discursively linked with local economic development,<sup>82</sup> the

development of new industries and inventions,<sup>83</sup> and even patriotism by maintaining the nation's competitive advantage on the international stage.<sup>84</sup>

Finally, services and collections targeted at labour were constructed as an effective antidote for labour strikes and social disturbances. Both *Public Libraries* and *Library Journal* published anecdotes from librarians and trustees about situations in which a local strike was averted because the workers had been brought to the library. In the case of miners in Butte, Montana, a library trustee boasted at an International Library Conference in London in 1897 that a strike had been averted because, as one miner said: 'No. I don't think the boys will be badly led away. They have learned to think a bit, but they have learnt lots of it there (pointing to the library)'.<sup>85</sup> In another example, the minds of 'sewing girls' were diverted from the topic of a strike by 'hav[ing] their attention directed to good literature, of which they were ignorant'.<sup>86</sup> The common feature in these types of stories was the depiction of labour as ignorant and therefore easy 'victim to the agitator',<sup>87</sup> or 'likely to be led astray by bad leadership',<sup>88</sup> or unable to 'discriminate between their own real interests and such sham reforms as are brought before them by so-called labor leaders'.<sup>89</sup>

### *The nascent consumer*

While the previous passage from Smith's 'The Library and the Mechanic'<sup>90</sup> dealt specifically with the constitution of labour within the context of the social relations of production, there was another area of service targeted not at the worker at work, but rather the worker's life beyond the walls of the factory, thus opening onto the second moment in capital's circuit, that of circulation. Again, labour is constructed as lacking in some essential way with respect to home and family life, thus requiring the services of the librarian and the collections of the public library. Generally, these articles fall into two categories: home economics<sup>91</sup> and commodity consumption.<sup>92</sup>

Significantly, the emphasis in the library literature on home economics and home improvement reproduced the messages of both labour and capital. Within their competing discourses, Carnegie and the Knights associated family stability, sobriety, and independence with home ownership. Yet despite these shared discursive resources, the means of home ownership and family, like self-improvement, did not lead to the same ends. According to labour historian Leon Fink, 'defense of an idealized family life as both the moral and material mainstay of society served as one basis for criticism of capitalist society'.<sup>93</sup>

### *The citizen*

The final aspect of the labour identity as constituted within the professional discourse is that of labourer as citizen. Indeed, the education of individuals for their role as citizens was a central concern for the emerging profession,<sup>94</sup> and the ambivalence and anxiety that middle-class Americans and capital felt towards universal suffrage are reflected in the library literature of the period.<sup>95</sup> That organized labour, specifically as a result of the Knights, had become a political force in its own right is well documented by labour historians.<sup>96</sup> For the Knights, educating workers for their roles as citizens was privileged above all else. General Master Powderly was clear on this point: 'I believe the claims that American citizenship should be based on intelligence and not wealth'.<sup>97</sup> Despite, or perhaps in light of, organized labour's political successes and near successes (the attempt to establish a third national party), the

professional discourse constitutes the labourer as ignorant and uneducated with respect to responsible citizenship and, as such, a threat to the Republic.<sup>98</sup> Organized labour was not the only group targeted as a threat; so too were new immigrants<sup>99</sup> and African Americans.<sup>100</sup> From this perspective, one library commentator argued, the state had a responsibility to educate its citizens out of a need for self-preservation<sup>101</sup> and the general welfare of the country.<sup>102</sup> Notably, it is in the area of citizenship and education that the discourses of labour and the public library converge. Both shared a common concern for the provision of high-quality information and analysis on the social questions of the day. The American Library Association Primer described 'the need for books and periodicals which give the thought of the best writers on the economic and social questions now under earnest discussion';<sup>103</sup> so, too, the Knights demanded that 'the best minds of the Order must give their precious thoughts to this system'.<sup>104</sup> However, what constituted the 'best writers' is left unsaid. In addition, it is possible that the Knights' suspicions of public education systems may have extended to include the public library: 'and even those who have gone to school had not been taught the truth of social, economic and political issues, but only distorted, anti-labour, pro-capital interpretations'.<sup>105</sup>

### Professional discourses and the legitimization of industrial capital

As discursive resources, professional discourses contributed to the larger social struggle over the contours of a stabilized industrial capitalism. Although the production, dissemination, and consumption of these ideological texts were limited to a small professional audience, their contribution is no less significant.

Underlying the selection of textual excerpts cited above are a number of common ideological markers that served to position the public library within American society in ways that reproduced capital's requirements for production and consumption. Indeed, within the profession's constitution of social identities and class relations, the role of the public library as a powerful means of socialization to and naturalization for the requirements of an emerging industrial capitalism is clear.

Underwriting the profession's agenda was a particular orientation toward social change<sup>106</sup> that equated human progress with the speed with which scientific and technological innovation could be applied to industrial production.<sup>107</sup> Professional discourse, like that of capital (as represented by Carnegie), attributed technology with independent agency above and beyond the human dimension.<sup>108</sup> Such technological determinism would prove one of the most powerful discursive resources of the twentieth century. By black-boxing the class relations embedded in technologies of production (including the central question of ownership), powerful ideologies of individualism, the myth of social mobility, and even the very concept of American democracy would emerge as common sense assumptions within the profession's discourse. The power and agency attributed to technology and its implications for social organization and the role of the public library therein is clearly reflected in the following:

To invent has become the watchword of the nineteenth century. To adjust to the changed economic conditions which inventions have brought about will most certainly be the province of the twentieth century, and the books and magazine articles which give the best of sociological thought ought to command the attention of earnest men and women



who, through the present 'storm and stress' period, discern the faint streaks of the dawn which usher in a new era when 'men as well as iron shall have been millennialized', and will have to come to recognize their interdependence, and make daily practice of the golden rule.<sup>109</sup>

With respect to anticipating the requirements of a future industrial capitalism and the role of the public library within that regime, early discourses of the period are similarly concerned with (1) justifying the development of a national and homogenized culture (including the standardization of professional practices) while simultaneously promoting an intense individualism;<sup>110</sup> (2) constituting the state (federal, state, and local) as an important source of social amelioration;<sup>111</sup> (3) legitimating a publicly supported library as a justifiable social expense;<sup>112</sup> and (4) demonstrating the centrality of the diffusion of 'useful knowledge' to their service mandate.

### **Capital's updated hegemonic project: reflections on the explanatory potential of the political economy of Carnegie's philanthropy for questions about the library programmes of Bill Gates**

The purpose of this research has been to provide the library community with additional tools with which to analyse, interpret, and respond to the broader cultural implications of private philanthropy, notably Gates', on the functioning of the public library. Given the parallels between Andrew Carnegie and Bill Gates, this historical analysis has sought to extend the list of comparators to include previously unexplored aspects of the relationship between Carnegie's library philanthropy and the class warfare surrounding the transition from a rural and agrarian way of life to an urban industrial one. Based on the theoretical tenets of the radical philanthropic perspective and using a discourse analytic method, Carnegie's library philanthropy in Pennsylvania during the 1880s and 1890s was read as one attempt by capital to solidify its power and control over the new productive technologies at the heart of fundamental social change. Carnegie's successful constitution of the 'labor question' as one of mutual class ignorance, and the corresponding solution — the establishment of free public libraries for the diffusion of 'useful knowledge' — represented an important ideological achievement for capital. Identifying the major themes underpinning Carnegie's library discourses (including ideologies of individualism, technological determinism, and the constitution of 'useful knowledge'), as well as the specific linguistic strategies employed for the purposes of rhetorical persuasion (i.e., attributing inanimate subjects with agency, simulating egalitarianism, etc.) provides us with a comprehensive set of comparators with which to analyse contemporary conditions for both their historical continuities and discontinuities. Finally, recognition that Carnegie's project was not uncontested, and that the savage conflicts between Carnegie and the working class in Braddock and Homestead reverberated even within the apparently pacific domain of the public library opens onto the role of the public library within the context of class struggle. This research has shown how the Knights of Labor, a foremost American trade union, while sharing Carnegie's emphasis on the importance of reading and education for working men and women, differed from him in their vision for the ultimate purposes of such activities. They articulated a different view of what

libraries could mean for labour. But this alternative, although not completely ignored by professional librarians, was eclipsed by the financial and ideological resources mobilized by Carnegie *vis-à-vis* his private philanthropy.

If, as has often been observed, Bill Gates is this era's Andrew Carnegie, then new questions based on the findings of this research can be asked regarding the influence of his philanthropy on America's public libraries. Considering the historically continuous nature of capitalism, who, we might want to know, are this generation's Knights of Labor? And where are today's battles over the ownership and control of the new productive technologies unfolding? More to the point, given the connection between Gates' philanthropy and the public library, how is this institution being positioned within the context of that conflict, and for whose benefit? In a related vein, in what ways might today's 'digital divide' update yesterday's 'labor question'? In order to answer these questions, the following two avenues for future research are posited. First, Gates' commitment to proprietary software and attitudes towards intellectual property rights are well known. They have also brought him into direct and repeated conflict with the Free Software Foundation/Open Source Initiative (FOSS) over questions about the ownership and control of the information economy's key productivity tools. At the same time, Gates' ongoing gifts of software come wrapped in their own proprietary discourse, ready for dissemination among recipient communities.<sup>113</sup> Continuing research into the relationship between public libraries and FOSS — not only as a viable technical and philosophical alternative to proprietary software, but as a modern avatar for labour — might prove enlightening. Second, while the concept of 'useful knowledge' dates back to the earliest days of the republic<sup>114</sup> within an industrial economy, and as reflected in Carnegie's library discourse, only that knowledge of direct (and indirect) utility to capital's circuit of production and circulation was promoted. Within the field of LIS, Wiegand has unpacked the impact of this privileged information, and the powerful social forces promoting it, on the evolution of the field.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, for Wiegand, the field's 'current research preoccupation with information technologies'<sup>116</sup> represents the historical continuation of that same paradigm. Significantly, Gates' framing of the needs for, and benefits of, access to the new information and communication technologies for the purpose of bridging the digital divide bears a close resemblance to Carnegie's concern with access to books ('useful knowledge') for the purpose of social advancement and success. What is Gates' emphasis on access to software and the Internet obscuring with regard to the needs of all members of the community, particularly the poor and otherwise disenfranchised? Who is being missed and at what cost?

Ultimately, the challenge for today's public librarians and library advocates is to develop an appreciation for the ways in which information capital constitutes and deploys its discursive resources around social change and particularly within its philanthropic discourses. This will enable the profession to (1) reflect critically on its own use of language, particularly for the ways it may inadvertently be contributing to a future information society at odds with the profession's traditional values, and (2) develop a powerful tool with which to subvert, destabilize, and hopefully recast the nature of dominant policy discourses to ensure that the community's needs are the priority, and not those of the philanthropist.

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> G. S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969).
- <sup>2</sup> E. St Lifer, 'Born Again Brooklyn: Gates Wires the Library', *Library Journal*, 121 (November 1996), 32–34.
- <sup>3</sup> Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, *Pilot Grant Program to Improve Internet Connections in Public Libraries*. Press release, 18 December 2008, <<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/press-releases/Pages/faster-internet-connections-in-libraries-081218.aspx>> [accessed 23 October 2009] (para. 15).
- <sup>4</sup> Anon., 'Late Bulletins: Gates' Foundation Changes Name, Increases Support', *Library Journal*, 124 (March 1999), 11.
- <sup>5</sup> A. Carnegie, 'The Gospel of Wealth', in *The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays*, ed. by E. C. Kirkland (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962), p. 81.
- <sup>6</sup> Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, *2009 Annual Letter from Bill Gates*, <<http://www.gatesfoundation.org/annual-letter/Pages/2009-annual-letter-introduction.aspx>> [accessed 23 October 2009].
- <sup>7</sup> E. C. Lagemann, *The Politics of Knowledge: The Carnegie Corporation, Philanthropy and Public Policy* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989); and S. Slaughter and E. Silva, 'Looking Backwards: How Foundations Formulated Ideology in the Progressive Period', in *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism: The Foundations at Home and Abroad*, ed. by R. Arnoe (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1980).
- <sup>8</sup> P. Krass, *Carnegie* (New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, 2002).
- <sup>9</sup> D. Goldiner, 'Gates Reducing Workload to Focus on Charity', *Calgary Herald*, final edn, 16 June 2006, A6 in Canadian Newsstand Major Dailies database (Document ID: 1062016091) [accessed 2 May 2009].
- <sup>10</sup> Krass; J. Dobrzynski, 'International Philanthropy: Strategies for Global Change', *Carnegie Reporter*, 4 (Autumn 2007); and 'Anonymous, Survey: The Business of Giving', *The Economist*, 378, 25 February 2006, 3.
- <sup>11</sup> Lagemann.
- <sup>12</sup> *Philanthropy and Cultural Imperialism: The Foundations at Home and Abroad*, ed. by R. Arnoe (Boston: G. K. Hall & Co., 1980).
- <sup>13</sup> D. Fischer, 'Philanthropic Foundations and the Social Sciences: A Response to Martin Bulmer', *Sociology*, 18 (November 1984), 580–87.
- <sup>14</sup> *Foundations for Social Change: Critical Perspectives on Philanthropy and Popular Movements*, ed. by D. R. Faber and D. McCarthy (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005).
- <sup>15</sup> Bobinski; Slaughter and Silva; *Carnegie Denied: Communities Rejecting Carnegie Library Construction Grants 1898–1925*, ed. by R. S. Martin (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993); and A. Van Slyck, *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995).
- <sup>16</sup> P. S. Richards, 'Aborted Library Projects in Pennsylvania: Community Reactions to Library Offers in Carnegie's Native State', in *Carnegie Denied*, ed. by R. S. Martin (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1993).
- <sup>17</sup> Van Slyck.
- <sup>18</sup> P. Krause, *The Battle for Homestead, 1880–1892: Politics, Culture, and Steel* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992).
- <sup>19</sup> Bobinski.
- <sup>20</sup> L. Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics* (Champaign, IL: Illini Books, 1985), p. xii.
- <sup>21</sup> W. Wiegand, 'Tunnel Vision and Blind Spots: What the Past Tells Us About the Present; Reflections on the Twentieth Century History of American Librarianship', *Library Quarterly*, 69 (January 1999), 1–32; and M. Harris, 'The Purpose of the American Public Library: a Revisionist Interpretation of History', in *Public Librarianship: A Reader*, ed. by J. Robbins-Carter (Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited, 1982).
- <sup>22</sup> W. Wiegand, 'To Reposition a Research Agenda: What American Studies Can Teach the LIS Community About the Library in the Life of the User', *Library Quarterly*, 73 (July 2003), 371.
- <sup>23</sup> B. Karl and S. Katz, 'Foundations and Ruling Class Elites', *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences*, 116 (Winter 1987), 1–39.
- <sup>24</sup> Fischer, 'Philanthropic Foundations', 580–87.
- <sup>25</sup> M. Bulmer, 'Philanthropic Foundations and the Development of the Social Sciences in the Early Twentieth Century: a Reply to Donald Fischer', *Sociology*, 18 (November 1984), 572–79.
- <sup>26</sup> Karl and Katz, p. 4.
- <sup>27</sup> D. Fischer, 'The Role of Philanthropic Foundations in the Reproduction and Production of Hegemony: Rockefeller Foundations and the Social Sciences', *Sociology*, 17 (May 1983), 206–33.
- <sup>28</sup> Bobinski, p. 13.
- <sup>29</sup> Krause.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 239.
- <sup>31</sup> R. M. Ohmann, *Selling Culture: Magazines, Markets, and Class at the Turn of the Century* (New York: Verso, 1996); and M. Schneirov, *The Dream of a New Social Order: Popular Magazines in America, 1893–1914* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).

- <sup>32</sup> P. S. Foner, *History of the Labor Movement in the United States*, 2 from the Founding of the American Federation of Labor to the Emergence of American Imperialism (New York: International Publishers, 1955).
- <sup>33</sup> Carnegie, 'The Gospel of Wealth', p. xx.
- <sup>34</sup> Foner, II, 30.
- <sup>35</sup> N. Fairclough, *Discourse and Social Change* (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 1993).
- <sup>36</sup> Ibid., p. 33.
- <sup>37</sup> Foner, II; G. Porter, 'Industrialization and the Rise of Big Business', in *The Gilded Age: Perspectives on the Origins of Modern America*, ed. by C. Calhoun (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1996); L. Fink, *In Search of the Working Class: Perspectives in American Labor History and Political Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); L. Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy: The Knights of Labor and American Politics* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1983); and D. Guérin, *100 Years of Labor in the USA* (London: Ink Links, 1979).
- <sup>38</sup> J. Swinton, *Striking for Life: Labor's Side of the Labor Question, the Right of the Workingman to a Fair Living and Articles Specially Contributed by Samuel Gompers, Eugene V. Debs [and], John W. Hayes* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1970), p. 31.
- <sup>39</sup> E. Arnesen, 'American Workers and the Labor Movement in the Late Nineteenth Century', in *The Gilded Age*, ed. by C. Calhoun, p. 41.
- <sup>40</sup> Foner, II, 206.
- <sup>41</sup> Krause; Foner, II, 206; Guérin; and Arnesen.
- <sup>42</sup> Carnegie, 'The Gospel of Wealth', p. 16.
- <sup>43</sup> L. Fink, 'The New Labor History and the Powers of Historical Pessimism: Consensus, Hegemony, and the Case of the Knights of Labor', *Journal of American History*, 75 (June 1988), 116.
- <sup>44</sup> Fink, *In Search of the Working Class*, p. 90.
- <sup>45</sup> Swinton, p. 29.
- <sup>46</sup> A. Carnegie, 'The Common Interest of Labour and Capital', Address to Workingmen [at Dedication of Carnegie Library, Braddock, PA., January, 1889], *The Empire of Business* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1903).
- <sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 71.
- <sup>48</sup> Carnegie, 'The Common Interest of Labour and Capital', p. 88.
- <sup>49</sup> Carnegie, 'The Gospel of Wealth', p. 31.
- <sup>50</sup> A. Carnegie, 'The Three-legged Stool: Scheme of the World's Work', in *Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie*, ed. by B. Hendrick (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1933), 211.
- <sup>51</sup> Carnegie, 'The Gospel of Wealth', p. 27.
- <sup>52</sup> J. O'Connor, *Accumulation Crisis* (New York: Basil Blackwell, 1984), p. 13.
- <sup>53</sup> Carnegie, 'The Common Interest of Labour and Capital', pp. 83–84.
- <sup>54</sup> Ibid., p. 85.
- <sup>55</sup> Carnegie, 'The Common Interest of Labour and Capital', p. 84.
- <sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp. 81–82.
- <sup>57</sup> Carnegie, 'The Common Interest of Labour and Capital', p. 86.
- <sup>58</sup> Ibid., pp. 79–86.
- <sup>59</sup> Carnegie, 'The Common Interest of Labour and Capital', p. 84.
- <sup>60</sup> L. Wolfe, *Lockout: The Story of the Homestead Strike of 1892: A Study of Violence, Unionism, and the Carnegie Steel Empire* (New York: Harper and Row Publishers, 1965), p. 232.
- <sup>61</sup> Carnegie, 'The Common Interest of Labour and Capital', p. 71.
- <sup>62</sup> A. Carnegie, 'Results of the Labor Struggle', in *The Andrew Carnegie Reader*, ed. by J. Frazier Wall (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992), p. 137.
- <sup>63</sup> Swinton, p. 369.
- <sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 368.
- <sup>65</sup> S. M. Jelley, *The Voice of Labor: Plain Talk by Men of Intellect on Labor's Rights, Wrongs, Remedies and Prospects* (Chicago: A. B. Gehman & Co., 1888), p. 55.
- <sup>66</sup> Ibid., p. 360.
- <sup>67</sup> Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy*, p. 111.
- <sup>68</sup> I. Yellowitz, *Industrialization and the American Labor Movement, 1850–1900* (Port Washington, NY: Kennikat Press, 1977), p. 61.
- <sup>69</sup> Carnegie, 'The Common Interest of Labour and Capital', pp. 71, 84–85.
- <sup>70</sup> Jelley, pp. 345, 360, 362, 366, and 391.
- <sup>71</sup> A. Carnegie, 'The Best Use of Wealth', in *Miscellaneous Writings of Andrew Carnegie*, ed. by B. Hendrick (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Co., 1933), p. 211.
- <sup>72</sup> Van Slyck; Harris; D. Garrison, *Apostles of Culture: The Public Librarian and American Society, 1876–1920* (Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003); and M. Harris, 'Portrait in Paradox: Commitment and Ambivalence in American Librarianship', *Libri*, 26 (December 1976), 281–301.
- <sup>73</sup> Anon., 'Editorial', *Library Journal*, 33 (March 1908), 81–82; DePuy, 'Proceedings from Illinois Library Association', *Public Libraries*, 5 (April 1900), 135–36; S. W. Foss, 'The Library and Industrial Workers: Carry the Library to the Workers', *Public Libraries*, 13 (March 1908), 83–89; A. J. Fiske, 'The Human Interest in Library Work in a Mining District', *Public Libraries*, 13 (March 1908), 73–81; Hoagland, 'Proceedings from Illinois Library Association', *Public Libraries*, 5 (April 1900), 126–29; M. Lindsay, 'Proceedings from Illinois Library Association', *Public Libraries*, 5

- (April 1900), 132; M. Parsons, 'The Library and the Workingman', *Public Libraries*, 13 (March 1908), 84–86; A. L. Peck, 'The Adaptation of Libraries to Local Needs', *Library Journal*, 20 (February 1895), 45–48; A. L. Peck, 'Workingmen's Clubs and the Public Library', *Library Journal*, 23 (November 1898), 612–14; A. Poray, 'Library Work in the Factories', *Public Libraries*, 13 (March 1908), 73–81; T. Smith, 'The Public Library and the Mechanic', *Public Libraries*, 15 (January 1910), 6–10; and S. S. Green, 'The Library in its Relations to Persons Engaged in Industrial Pursuits', *Library Journal*, 14 (April 1889), 215–25.
- <sup>74</sup> Green, 'The Library in its Relations'; S. S. Green, 'Address of the President at the San Francisco Conference of Librarians', 12–16 October 1891, *Library Journal*, 16 (January/December 1891), 1–9; C. K. Bolton, 'The Librarian's Duty as a Citizen', *Library Journal*, 21 (May 1896), 219–22; F. Crunden, 'What of the Future': Address Delivered at the Public Meeting, Tuesday 22 June, ALA Conference in Philadelphia, *Library Journal*, 22 (October 1897), 5–11; W. Ford, 'The Public Library and the State', *Library Journal*, 25 (June 1900), 275–80; G. Vincent, 'The Individualizing Duty of the Library', *Public Libraries*, 13 (December 1908), 391–97; G. Vincent, 'The Library and Social Memory', *Public Libraries*, 9 (October 1904), 479–85; W. E. Foster, 'The Argument for Support of Free Public Libraries', *Library Journal*, 16 (1891), C39; E. S. Wilcox, 'Presidential Address, Proceedings from the Illinois Library Association', *Public Libraries*, 5 (April 1900), 121–23; and M. Cohen, 'Differentiation of Libraries', *Library Journal*, 15 (April 1890), 71.
- <sup>75</sup> Smith, pp. 6–10.
- <sup>76</sup> Ibid., pp. 6–10.
- <sup>77</sup> Ibid., pp. 6–10.
- <sup>78</sup> Vincent, 'The Individualizing Duty of the Library', p. 395.
- <sup>79</sup> W. Mowry, 'The Relation of the Public Library to Education', *Library Journal*, 16 (October 1891), 301–02; and Bolton, p. 219.
- <sup>80</sup> Vincent, 'The Individualizing Duty of the Library', p. 397.
- <sup>81</sup> Fink, *In Search of the Working Class*, p. 97.
- <sup>82</sup> Mowry, p. 302; H. Law, 'The Public Library as a Business Proposition', *Library Journal*, 30 (July 1905), 405–08; and E. Pechin, 'A Business Man's Appeal for the Library', *Library Journal*, 17 (April 1892), 126.
- <sup>83</sup> Lindsay, p. 132.
- <sup>84</sup> Foss, p. 89; and Wilcox, p. 121.
- <sup>85</sup> Anon., 'Why There Was No Strike', *Library Journal*, 22 (September 1897), 439.
- <sup>86</sup> DePuy, p. 136.
- <sup>87</sup> Ibid., p. 136.
- <sup>88</sup> Anon., 'Why There Was No Strike', p. 439.
- <sup>89</sup> Peck, 'Workingmen's Clubs', p. 612.
- <sup>90</sup> Smith, pp. 6–10.
- <sup>91</sup> Hoagland, pp. 126–29.
- <sup>92</sup> Fiske, pp. 73–81.
- <sup>93</sup> Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy*, p. 11.
- <sup>94</sup> Wilcox, p. 121; H. M. Utley, 'Address of the President', *Library Journal*, 20 (December 1895), 1–4; F. M. Crunden, 'The Value of the Free Public Library', *Library Journal*, 15 (March 1890), 79–81; American Library Association, 'A.L.A. primer', *Public Libraries*, 1 (May 1896), 5–10; and S. Hrbek, 'The Library and the Foreign Born Citizen', *Public Libraries*, 15 (March 1910), 98–105.
- <sup>95</sup> Peck, 'Workingmen's Clubs', p. 612.
- <sup>96</sup> Foner, II, 30; Fink, *Workingmen's Democracy*, p. xii; and K. Voss, *The Making of American Exceptionalism: The Knights of Labor and Class Formation in the Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1993).
- <sup>97</sup> G. E. McNeill, 'History of the Knights of Labor', in *The Labor Movement: The Problem of Today*, ed. by G. E. McNeill (New York: A. M. Kelley Publishers, 1971), p. 421.
- <sup>98</sup> Peck, 'Workingmen's Clubs', p. 612.
- <sup>99</sup> Hrbek, pp. 98–105.
- <sup>100</sup> Mowry, pp. 301–02.
- <sup>101</sup> Utley, pp. 1–4.
- <sup>102</sup> Peck, 'Workingmen's Clubs', pp. 612–14.
- <sup>103</sup> American Library Association, p. 5.
- <sup>104</sup> Utley, pp. 1–4.
- <sup>105</sup> Foner, II, p. 75.
- <sup>106</sup> J. Larned, 'Retrospect and Prospect in the Last Years of the Century: Proceedings of the ALA Conference of Librarians, Cleveland Conference', *Library Journal*, 21 (December 1896), 5–12.
- <sup>107</sup> Hoagland, pp. 126–29; and Lindsay, p. 132.
- <sup>108</sup> Hoagland, p. 127.
- <sup>109</sup> Ibid., p. 127.
- <sup>110</sup> Vincent, 'The Individualizing Duty of the Library', p. 391; and Vincent, 'The Library and Social Memory', p. 485.
- <sup>111</sup> Utley, pp. 1–4; and Crunden, 'The Value of the Free Public Library', pp. 79–81.
- <sup>112</sup> Utley, pp. 1–4.
- <sup>113</sup> S. Stevenson, 'Public Libraries, Public Access Computing, FOSS and CI: There are Alternatives to Private Philanthropy', *First Monday*, 12 (May 2007) <<http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/1833/1717>> [accessed 23 October 2009].
- <sup>114</sup> M. Reinhold, 'The Quest for "Useful Knowledge" in Eighteenth-century America', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, 119 (April 1975), 108–32.
- <sup>115</sup> Wiegand, 'Tunnel Vision and Blind Spots', p. 23.
- <sup>116</sup> W. Wiegand, 'Broadening Our Perspectives', *Library Quarterly*, 73 (January 2003), viii.

### Notes on contributor

Siobhan Stevenson is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Information at the University of Toronto, Canada. After working for ten years with an agency of the Ontario government responsible for public libraries, she returned to the University of Western Ontario to pursue her Ph.D. in library and information science. The problems she addresses in her research revolve around issues she encountered in the field. As a political economist, attending to historical context is a central component of her scholarship. Her work has also been published in *Information Society*, *Canadian Journal of Library and Information Science*, *First Monday*, and *Progressive Librarian*.

Correspondence to: Siobhan Stevenson. Email: [siobhan.stevenson@utoronto.ca](mailto:siobhan.stevenson@utoronto.ca)

Copyright of Library & Information History is the property of Maney Publishing and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.